

SELECTMEN'S WORKSHOP
March 19, 2012
McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall
Spencer, Massachusetts 01562

Selectmen Present: Chairman Berthiaume, Vice Chair Pepe, Clerk Woodbury, and Member Fritze

Staff Present: Town Administrator Gaudette

Mr. Berthiaume called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

- Discussion: Municipal Aggregation of Electricity – Kenneth Elstein from Hampshire Council of Governments. Mr. Elstein came before the Board to discuss the possibility of joining with other towns to purchase electricity at a price lower than that offered by Ngrid. In order to participate, the Board would have to have an article approved at Town Meeting authorizing the Selectmen to enter into a contract. Customers would have the option to opt-out of the program at anytime. Currently, the purchase of electricity is an opt-in option. Mr. Gaudette has drafted a warrant with an article place holder for this purpose. Mr. Berthiaume asked Mr. Elstein to forward Mr. Gaudette a list of all the communities considering participating in the aggregation. Mr. Gaudette will then reply with dates and times of Town Meeting. Mr. Elstein stated he would be available to attend Town Meeting.
- Discussion: Sewer Commissioners. Commissioners White, Dufault, and Mercandante were present along with Superintendent Robidoux to discuss several issues regarding the Sewer Department. Mr. Berthiaume opened by asking if there had been anything new regarding the neighboring lakes since the last time the Commissioners attended. Mr. White stated there hadn't except that they turned down a request to tour the WWTP due to the fact that it is not handicapped accessible.

Mr. White then brought up 3 issues. The first was the need for a full-time clerk of the works for the Meadow Rd Pump Station Building as explained by the Building Inspector. The Commissioners were concerned about the cost. Mr. Gaudette stated that they should get clarification from the Building Inspector and if there is a difference in interpretation of the code, Mr. Gaudette will mediate. However, if it is simply a matter of cost, the only ones that can waive fees is the Board of Selectmen.

The second issue was that their attempt to change the classification for Mr. Robidoux was rejected by the Personnel Board and asked if there was anything the Board of Selectmen could do. Mr. Gaudette explained that the Town has a Personnel Bylaw that gives this authority to the Personnel Board.

The third issue was presented in the form of a handout in which the Commissioners explained they could be facing major plant upgrades in upwards of \$30,000,000 and feel that the Town should help foot the bill, not just the users. The Board explained that this is not normal, that users through Enterprise Fund Debt Service or Capital Outlay

pay to maintain the infrastructure, not all tax payers including those with septic systems. The discussion can be revisited once the Commissioners get their next NPDES permit from EPA.

- Miscellaneous: Mr. Berthiaume wanted to acknowledge the SEBRSD for allowing the Town to use a lift for the purposes of painting the Great Hall. He also wanted to acknowledge the DPHS cheerleaders who won the State Championship and will be going to Florida for nationals. Mr. Pepe stated that he received many thanks when he was at MHPI recently for the Board's decision to move the Senior Center to the Fish & Game Club.
- Discussion: Annual Town Meeting Capital Planning Program. Mr. Gaudette provided the Board with the Final Rankings of the Capital Improvements Planning Committee. He also provided them with his proposed Capital Program for the Annual Town Meeting, proposing funding sources for the requested capital items based on the rankings of the Committee. The Board asked Mr. Gaudette to post a "roving" meeting for Saturday morning on the 24th so they could visit the various departments and review the items that have been requested.
- Discussion: FY2013 Budget Update. Mr. Gaudette went over his Budget Proforma for the proposed FY2013 Budget. He explained that he has had some increases in some areas since his previous presentation, most evidently the possible addition of another out of district vocational student at Smith Vocational which brought a \$30,000 deficit up to \$45,000. Mr. Gaudette said by asking for a \$10,000 transfer from the Conservation Commission and hopefully negotiating a 0% increase in Health Insurance will eliminate the deficit and establish a level funded budget for FY2013.
- Discussion: Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Gaudette presented his most recent budget draft. The Board will discuss again on March 26th and will vote to close and set the warrant on April 9th.
- Discussion: Winter Plowing Damage and Mailbox Policy. Mr. Berthiaume asked if any members any issues and no one brought anything forward. Mr. Berthiaume stated that if adopted, we will need to properly educate the public, maybe through the Fall Newsletter.
- Library Project Update: Mr. Gaudette informed the Board that he and Mr. Berthiaume will be meeting with architect Kaffee Kang to discuss the bid issues with this project.

A motion to adjourn (Woodbury/Pepe) passed 4/0 and the meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam D. Gaudette
Town Administrator

_____ Chairman

_____ Vice Chair

_____ Clerk

_____ Member

_____ Member

Board of Selectmen